

America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUMGAIT
MASSACRES AGAINST AZER-
BAIJANI CITIZENS OF ARMENIAN
HERITAGE

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2010

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, this Sunday will mark the anniversary of the tragic massacres that took place against Azerbaijani citizens of Armenian heritage in February of 1988, in the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan. This 3-day rampage, carried out by Azerbaijani nationals, left dozens of Armenians dead, a majority of whom were set on fire alive after being beaten and tortured. Hundreds of innocent people received injuries of different severity and became physically impaired. Women, among them minors, were abused. More than 200 apartments were robbed, dozens of cars were destroyed and burned, dozens of art and crafts studios, shops and kiosks were demolished, and thousands of people became refugees.

Madam Speaker, these crimes were never adequately prosecuted by the Government of Azerbaijan, and most of its organizers and executors were simply set free, many of whom are presently members of the Azeri Parliament. Despite the attempt by the Government of Azerbaijan to cover up these crimes, enough brave witnesses came forward to give an accurate account of the offenses.

The Sumgait massacres are just another in a long line of Azerbaijan's aggressions against the Armenian people. The events in Sumgait were preceded by a wave of anti-Armenian rallies that shook the city in February 1988. Almost the entire territory of the city, with a population of 250,000, became an arena for mass violence against its Armenian population.

The attacks also marked the beginning of a larger campaign of ethnic cleansing targeting the Armenian people, culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. The war claimed nearly 30,000 lives and left over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. The continued hostilities in Azerbaijan and the military aggression against the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh in 1992 through 1994 led to the disappearance of a 450,000-strong Armenian community in Azerbaijan within a span of just a few years. As this April marks the 95th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, we also pause to remember the crimes committed in Sumgait and the pogroms conducted against the Armenian people in Azerbaijan.

Madam Speaker, this anniversary reminds us yet again of the historical injustice the Armenian people have faced, unfortunately, throughout their history. As we join with the Armenian people and all people of goodwill in remembering these atrocities, I strongly urge Azerbaijan and Turkey to cease their blockade and aggressive posture against the Armenian people and work to achieve a lasting peace. It is time for the United States to do all that it can and to use its geopolitical influence to send a message that ethnically charged genocides, illegal blockades of sovereign nations

and the constant harassment of the Armenian people will not be tolerated.

RECOGNIZING THE TREE OF LIFE
FOOD PANTRY IN PURCELL-
VILLE, VIRGINIA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2010

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Tree of Life food pantry in Purcellville, Virginia, which is in my congressional district. Through the group effort of dedicated volunteers, the Tree of Life food pantry has been able to help the hungry in western Loudoun County.

The Tree of Life food pantry was established in November 2009 to serve the hungry in Purcellville and the surrounding area in Loudoun County. In these tough economic times, so many families across the Nation are struggling to put food on the table. Some face grave economic challenges. Food pantries, like the Tree of Life, are able to help people make it through these challenging times.

The Tree of Life food pantry owes some of its success to its local partners, including Giant and Wegmans grocery stores and Costco Wholesale warehouse, which all pledged their support to the organization. These partnerships are proof that the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act, which protects food donors from liability, has been successful in helping to deliver surplus food to food banks in need.

Besides providing for the hungry, the Tree of Life food pantry also serves its community through ministering to the elderly and sick by providing additional food and resources. This organization has truly been a blessing to its community.

I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in recognizing the good work of the Tree of Life food pantry and its dedicated volunteers in serving the hungry in Loudoun County, Virginia.

HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY
FAIR COMPETITION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act.

The McCarran-Ferguson Act, passed in 1945, exempted insurance companies from antitrust legislation that applies to most other business. The Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act removes the antitrust exemption for health insurance companies, requiring them to compete fairly and adhere to the same antitrust laws as others. No longer will health insurers be allowed to price-fix, divide up territories among themselves, or sabotage their competitors in order to gain a monopoly in the marketplace. Such practices have been outlawed in other industries for decades.

The Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act will bring much needed reform to the

health insurance industry by allowing true competition between health insurers. Competition is what drives our economy, spurs innovation, and ensures that the American consumer gets a fair deal. More competition means lower health insurance costs for higher quality healthcare.

For too long, the health insurance exemption has led to higher premiums for consumers and contributed to the unsustainable increases in health care costs. As a result, 94% of all health insurance markets are "highly concentrated"—meaning consumers have little or no choice between insurance providers. There are only two industries in our country that are exempt from antitrust laws—the health insurance industry and major league baseball.

The American people deserve better than this and I'm proud to cast my vote in support of the Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act.

JOSEPH ISIAH TORCHIA

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 26, 2010

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Joseph Isiah Torchia. Joseph is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Heart of America Council Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Joseph has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Joseph has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Joseph has displayed dedication and perseverance with this significant achievement, values which will stay with him throughout his life.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Joseph Isiah Torchia for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN GOVERNMENT
REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show further support for H.R. 2314, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2009 and would like to submit for the RECORD a letter of support from the Honorable Calvin Say, Speaker for the House of Representatives in the Hawaii State Legislature.

STATE OF HAWAII,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Honolulu, HI, February 19, 2010.

Aloha,

I write to express my support for you, the Hawaii Congressional Delegation, in your efforts to pass the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act.